

Chronology of Relationship of the Master Plan Working Group to Newark City

Date	Action or Event
1997	Residents take part in series of meetings convened by the city on various aspects of the Master Plan. MPWG formed to monitor city's Master Plan process
Feb. '98 –	Presentation of each of the Master Plan elements by Kathleen Kelly- including Land Use, Zoning, Housing, Open Space and Recreation – monthly meetings continue at locations around the city and City Hall
Dec. '98	Parsons, Brinkerhoff Report- Newark's Economic Development Land Use and Transportation Plan
March '99	Critique of MP Update by MPWG focusing on limited scope, no City-wide vision, inadequate public participation, emphasis on large-scale development, lack of attention to quality of life issues, lack of inclusion of community facilities – schools, parks, open space and not incorporating neighborhood planning.
March '99	Land for Learning formed, subgroup MPWG
April-May '99	Some ward meetings to discuss draft Land Use element to get comments proposed maps – hosted by non-profits
Summer '99	Zoning Ordinance Working Group- consultants expect to complete work by year's end.
June 22, '99	MPWG's request to meet with Mayor James to discuss Master Plan process and content
June 29, '99	Mayor refuses to meet with MPWG. Says all concerns should be directed to Kathleen Kelly.
December '99	Kathleen Kelly leaves her position – no one named to provide continuity to Master Plan process
December '99	Reexamination Report on Newark's 1990 Master Plan approved by the Central Planning Board
April 11, '99	MPWG meeting with Joaquin Matias (Kathleen Kelly's replacement) to discuss MP process and concerns

April 17, '00 MPWG holds Press Conference to underscore the importance of reserving land for schools

April 19, '00 MPWG and Land for Learning hold rally at City Hall with school parents to raise issue of reserving land for schools.

Summer '00 Amended Redevelopment Plan to permit smaller lots than previously required. Approved by Central Planning Board. Redevelopment Plans cover between 25% and 33% of city land.

June '00 MPWG requests meeting with Mayor James

Sept. '00 Al Faiella meets with MPWG in place of the mayor. MPWG's agenda: designate city personnel to oversee MP process, establish timetable for process and indicate revisions that will be made to the Land Use maps.

Oct. '00 MPWG letter to Al Faiella –confirm discussion in which he agreed that the MP should be a living document that reflects a shared vision of all stakeholders and includes neighborhood planning and priorities.

Nov. 00 Planning Board passes East Ward Redevelopment Plan. These plans, attaching every single piece of city owned property and designating it for housing development, were eventually passed by city council for every ward.

Dec. 7, '00 MPWG letter to City Council stating its reasons for opposing the ordinance that allows reduction of lot size in redevelopment areas. Council approves ordinance.

Feb. '01 Resolution passed by the City Council strongly urging the city government to proceed expeditiously in updating the MP.

March 19, '01 MPWG meeting with Harold Lucas – Follow-up letter to him confirms group's about the importance of siting schools on the Land Use maps and suggests a two-step process for community meetings: 1. Community presents its concerns and desires to be included in the MP and the City provides factual information and 2. the City meets again with groups to advise on the status of their recommendations.

Nov. 2, '01 MPWG meeting with Joaquin Matias, Mark Barksdale and staff for a presentation on the Land Use element. The City stated it would pass the Zoning Ordinance by year's end. It will include on the maps the 19 approved schools and the balance of the schools will

be included as public areas on the maps. J. Matias said that the Land Use element and the Zoning Ordinance are the starting points for future planning in Newark and he suggested that meetings be held in each of the five wards by the end of January to review these materials. He also affirmed his commitment to neighborhood planning.

Fall 2001	East Ward Redevelopment Plan amended at city council (some Ironbound properties removed) - one of five redevelopment plans which include all the city owned properties in the city. ICC's community land use plan presented in draft form to the city, and published in final form in December (12,000 copies).
Feb – March '02	10 Meetings held (2 in each of the five wards) to present draft – meetings are rushed because city wants this “passed before June” – Ironbound meeting held at East Side High School presents 2 drafts (community’s plan and city’s) after repeated requests for follow up meetings with the city are unanswered.
March 13, '02	MPWG met with J. Matias and consultants after reviewing the recommendations that came out of the ward meetings. J. Matias reaffirmed that the Land Use element is a prerequisite for the new Zoning Ordinance
March 14, 02	MPWG letter to J. Matias expressing concern about: a. when the City will respond to recommendations from the ward meetings; b. how public participation will be broadened; c. clarification about next steps and d. how neighborhood planning will be incorporated in the process, particularly plans already developed by La Casa de Don Pedro and the Ironbound Community Corporation. No response was received for several months.
May 13, '02	J. Matias’ response to MPWG letter included a number of issues: Response to the ward meetings will be made by June 28 th ; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultant will review and incorporate recommendations where appropriate;• Draft document will be presented to City officials including the City Council, then to MPWG after which it will be finalized;• It will go to the Central Planning Board for approval in August or September of this year where there will be a public hearing.• The City has reserved substantial funds for neighborhood planning and it will seek additional funds to augment what they have.

- In principle, City agencies are in agreement with the plans of La Casa de Don Pedro and the Ironbound Community Corporation.

Oct. 9, '02

MPWG meeting with Dr. Niathan Allen, the new Director of the Department of Economic and Housing Development. He confirmed that the City remains committed to the MP process, and he recognizes the importance of community involvement. He acknowledged that the process is way behind schedule because of other priorities in his department and he is working on a revised MP schedule that he will share with the group when it meets again in two weeks.

November 26, '02

MPWG meeting with Dr. Allen. He provided a draft of the responses to the ward meeting recommendations, and presented a revised timeline for the MP process. He agreed to the following meetings in February in order to finalize the Land Use element:

- Meeting with MPWG
- Meeting with La Casa de Don Pedro
- Meeting with the Ironbound Community Corporation
- Planning Board briefing
- City Council briefing
- Community meetings – total of three

Dr. Allen also agreed to place all school sites on the Land Use maps. He also indicated that parks and open space are a priority to the City. In discussing the new zoning ordinance, he stated that only the administrative section is currently being reviewed.

Nov. Dec. 02

Meeting took place with ICC/Dr. Allen (ICC also met with City Business Administrator. Common ground reached on some key issues.

Jan. 03

MPWG addressed letter to Dr. Allen asking for updated time, Ward meeting schedule, responses to written comments, City's proposal for neighborhood planning in writing, school sites Be correct on Land Use map, parks be incorporated. Jan. letter from Dr. Allen to City Council indicates funding is needed to complete tasks.

MPWG response is use funding to complete the elements needed to make this a complete and thorough plan – parks, housing, community facilities, etc. – and incorporate those elements in the current draft.

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1996

Rescue other files
of possible
MPWG
chronology

Date	Action or Event
Feb. 5 or 6 2003	Meeting with Dr. Allen which covered the upcoming ward Meetings, how and where they should be held, etc. Also discussed at that meeting was a "completed draft of the Zoning ordinance, which members asked for copy of, and The open space element, which people felt should be included Or at least areas which had already been identified by neighborhoods as open space or gardens. Groups had asked for written description of the city's "neighborhood planning" ideas, but it had not been received from the prior Nov.
March 2003	City commits to expanded number of community meetings to Accommodate public interest in the master plan.
March 2003	Letter confirms 10 ward meetings, with dates announced 5 weeks Prior so organizations have time to organize. City says it is "in Process" on the zoning ordinance, and should be done with a draft In six months. Groups that had completed neighborhood plans are Meeting with city to work on language of Master Plan. MPWG Underlined need for new resources in order to have enough people to Complete essential tasks, like the open space plan.
June 2003	Letter to City Council supporting their interest in completion of the Master Plan, and offering to be of assistance, outlining major Concerns.
Sept. 30	City's revised schedule puts completion of the zoning ordinance With a target date of Sept. 2004, and gives timelines for adoption of All remaining elements, ending in July 2005.
Dec.	Meeting discussed locations for 10 ward meetings.
Jan. 2004	Meeting w. City Officials (Mattias, Allen, Barksdale. While open Spaces are not sited on the map, school sites are. Consultants are Finishing the Land Use element. A series of amendments were Being made. One additional meeting would be held with the MPWG And consultants. 10 meetings will be held in the wards, cosponsored with the various non-profit groups, at sites which the groups selected. Outreach methodology was discussed. The completed neighborhood plans were discussed, (Ironbound and La Casa) but there was disagreement on whether they could be adopted into the city master Plan, who will get funds for neighborhood planning, etc. City said they Would meet with MPWG before decisions on these things. As per the Zoning ordinance, the city said they were preparing a series of "white Papers" on key zoning issues. MPWG asked for a representative on the City's Zoning Task Force.

Feb. 2004 City's "goal for Master Plan adoption" is May 17 council meeting. This puts pressure on community groups to hold meetings resident Quickly.

April 2004 Richard Preiss and Dave Roberts, Matias and Barksdale are Present at meeting which presents revisions, and final draft 10 ward meetings are finalized and announced. A long discussion (codified in a letter) which says who does what about the meetings.

April 28 - Meetings begin with East Ward at East Side High School. This is Followed by: May 3 West Ward, May 4, Central Ward, May 5 North Ward, and May 11 South Ward. Around the City, hundreds Of people participate in these sessions.

July 2004 Land for Learning rep joins the NPS Facilities Committee (Sr. Pat Jelly appointed in August 2004).

July 28 ICC letter pointing out neighborhood being hurt by failure to complete The zoning ordinance, with passage of projects at Planning Board.

Sept. 10 Meeting with Councilwoman Bridgeforth concerning amendments to Land Use maps, since Ms. Bridgeforth also sits on the City Planning Board.

Sept. 13 Land Use element of the Msater Plan discussed at the Planning Board. MPWG gives testimony.

Sept. 30 Continuation of above public hearing.

October Communication to Donald Tucker, again offering MPWG's assistance With completion, and pointing out that the original completion date Was June 2002.

Nov. 22 Amended Master Plan is on agenda at the Planning Board

Dec. 6, 2004 Master Plan adopted at Planning Board. At this meeting the Planning Board members asked for a time line and action plan for completion Of the required elements within 60 days.

Dec. 12 Star Ledger features completed Land Use Element of Master Plan.

Dec. 21 UVSO Block Group addresses Dr. Allen on negative impacts due to the Failure of adtopion of the zoning ordinance.

Jan. 25 Meeting with Dr. Allen which recommends Gerard Haizel to serve on The City Zoning Taskforce. Mr. Haizel is a licensed professional Planner. The process around Neighborhood planning was addressed As far as what the Planning Areas should be. And there was discussion About substandard lots.

Jan. 4 2006 MPWG Press Release concerning the ways the failure to pass the Zoning Ordinance was negatively impacting on neighborhoods.

Jan. 19 2006 On behalf of MPWG, GNC sends a letter to Planning Board Chair which reminds them about their own request for timeline and Action plan, and asks for copy of the reply to their request.

April 2006 MPWG gives a presentation at the Special Council Conference Meeting.
Various MPWG members contribute written or verbal testimony. A letter In the Star Ledger discusses the problems in the East Ward, the Block Organizations in the west ward submit a letter, etc., etc. The failure of The city to pass zoning ordinance is hurting neighborhoods. Development Is taking place that is contradiction with the Land Use Maps (2004).

Summer 2006 - Many MPWG members participate in the transition with the new city Administration.

Oct. 2006 MPWG members gave a presentation at City Hall to members Of the newly elected City Council, underscoring that neighborhoods are being Affected by the failure to pass the zoning ordinance with projects just being Passed through.

October 2006 Members of MPWG participate in intensive design charette conducted by Regional Plan Association in partnership with the City of Newark.

Nov. Dec. 06 MPWG (and others) co-sponsor RPA meetings in each ward to present Results of their charette and get community input.

Dec. 2006 Mtg – Hosted Joel Sonkin and other aides of Mr. Pryor in a discussion of status of the Zoning Ordinance, the Reexam Report, Housing element, etc.

Jan. 10, 2007 – MPWG hosted Stefan Pryor at its monthly meeting, for an update on all Aspects of the work. RFP was issued for the Reexam Report, and will be Soon for the Housing Element. RFP was issued for “on call” planners (which MPWG had reservations about). Neighborhoods can submit specific zoning Changes which they feel are “emergency” or extremely necessary. Revised Schedule for completion of Reexam is 6 months, Housing Element, 6 Months, zoning 18 to 24 months AFTER IT IS STARTED.

MPWG doing a letter to Pryor summarizing and commenting on above.

Feb. 2007 - Discussed appointment of new Housing Director, RPA draft plan and what will happen to it, uncompleted Master Plan elements, budget hearings and inclusion of funds for planning, results of charette on bayonne box, Reexam Report, Housing Element. There were questions about the “unspecified on-call planners”. This was to be added in to Richard’s letter to Stefan Pryor.

March

April 07- City (Stefan Pryor) updated MPW, RFP’s were out for Reexam Report – Housing Element it was uncertain what would happen, Bayonne Box charette happened and Alex Dambach is supposed to follow up with recommendations, RFP for Unspecified Planners Grant is out (no description of work), City is reviewing policy documents prepared by the Zoning Committeee, no information on Planning Director, Current focus of the city’s planning: Reexam Report completion, Downtown Liveability Project, and Port Newark

There is currently a state mandate which requires Planning Board and Zoning Board to be trained – has it happened yet in Newark? City’s budget proposals do not include neighborhood planning, but there is more money for planning, about 6 higher paid jobs, GNC is working with the city on “urban farms” proposal. Neighborhoods also gave reports -

May – Mike Myers Cancellation – MPWG discussed points to discuss with the new Planning Director, including 1) timeline for completion of Master Plan and elements, 2) of neighborhood based planning and existing plans 3) revision of zoning ordinance 4) integration of planning applications and procedures with city’s planning department. We also discussed meeting with Charon Montayne, Chair of the Central Planning Board to update her on our efforts.

June 6 Meeting – Mike Meyers meets with MPWG. The June minutes summarize this meeting which covered many points on 1) Toni Griffin has been hired as new Planning Director 2) New affordable Housing Production 3) Substandard housing conditions 4) Abandoned properties 5) Land acquisition 6) Special needs 7) Home ownership 8) Downtown Living initiative

July – Met with Planning Director Toni Griffin. Discussed a number of concerns. Asked that in the new city process for community involvement, the recently adopted land use maps be used as a basis for neighborhood discussion as well as larger plans such as RPA vision.

August 8, 2007

At this meeting attendance was small due to area flooding. However those present used the time to discuss and react to the meeting August 7 which was held with the City’s New Planning Director, Toni Griffin, and a consultant whom she has brought in from Washington, D.C., to work on “community engagement.” From that meeting it seems that:

- the City wishes to do some “visioning” meetings around the City – a bit unclear what the topic will be (broad, neighborhood based – we pushed for neighborhood based using land use maps)
- consultant has been hired for the Reexam Report
- another consultant was hired for “unspecified planning”

- we pushed for research to be done by her department and made accessible to all, for example, good stats on housing development, what types of housing, what income levels, etc.
- completion of the zoning ordinance came up
- overall role and power of the Planning Department in the City came up
- overall resources which are available came up
- the formation of the new economic development group without community members on it, or at least not many (Brick City something or other)

At the MPWG meeting, it was suggested that we “step back” and examine where we are with the process. There is a feeling of reluctance to engage in a process unless it will be productive. Some groups are already busy trying to get the city to pass “emergency zoning measures”, and one approach was that that is where people should concentrate. We also discussed inviting Ms. Griffin to the next meeting for part of the meeting time (Richard) and having RPA help us to do the “step back” exercise, perhaps at a second special meeting in September.

October 07 – Toni Griffin again in attendance reports on the 5 consultant firms the City has hired, and what they are each supposed to do. She also presented two initiatives Master Plan Launch and Bayonne Box. She said emergency zoning recommendations for neighborhoods have not yet been looked at closely.

November 07 – Toni Griffin in attendance - \$2 million approved for consultants to do work. Neighborhood audits being done. There was a discussion of housing standards & bayonne box and announcement of a Nov. 27 public meeting on this. A discussion of how the planning office relates to the “applications process” at the planning board. A discussion of proposed change in parking regs from 1.5 to 1. Wide discussion on zoning – draft zoning changes handed out, and request for comments.

December 07 – Bayonne Box Charette – neighborhoods still concerned about parking reductions, GNC still concerned about community gardens, and about water. Update from Perris Slaughter on the “neighborhood audits”. These are supposed to eventually dovetail with the city’s capital budget. City asked for comments. Beginning work on Reexam Report, Emergency Zoning Measures and Master Plan.

Jan. 08 – A letter will go to Toni Griffin asking about RFP for Master Plan, status of Re-exam? And a number of other questions. Comments again solicited for capital improvement audit. Discussion of some of the various efforts going on in parts of the city, and new organizations like Brick City Development Association, Newark Foundation, etc.

Feb. 08 – Toni Griffin was present for an update. City is understaffed. Damon Rich is hired as waterfront planner. \$2 million approved for planning consultants. The Re-exam will be first part of the master plan. Emergency Zoning, not much progress. Richard met with BCDC and wants to set up a follow up meeting. Public Meeting for the Highlands Council. Robin said she would follow up with Hans Decker.

March 08 – Toni Griffin made presentation of the 2025 report. Power point presentation.

April 08 – City planners gave a presentation of Zoning Reforms (Power Point) Billboards, Sexual businesses, bayonne boxes... historic areas, and the city is working on industrial I zoning.

May 2008

June 2008 – Planning team was present to address MPWG. A draft of 9 zoning issues was passed out. Consultants for the Reexam are on Board. A Mayor's Citizen Advisory Board will be created. Don Edwards in charge of community engagement. Discussion of neighborhood based planning and how these plans or current neighborhoods will be incorporated into new master plan, or how master plan can be amended. Discussion re. whether the city departments are working in coordination or not.

July 2008

August 2008 – Invitation only “Listening sessions” held on the 2025 report.

Sept. 2008 -

Discussion of the listening sessions, and their follow up. Our particular concern is that they were supposed to be followed by public meetings, either ward meetings, or some other way of getting the information out to the public. Richard will draft a letter to Ms. Griffin, with ccs to all the city council and the mayor, concerning this. He will also enquire about the posting of the 2025 plan to the city website, so people could access it, which was promised. What is the city's timeline and process or this to happen?

Also there were points made by people in the listening sessions, which we have no way of knowing if they were incorporated into a “revised version” or not.

As we know, this is the Reexam Report for the City. It is all they are “legally required” to do in terms of updating the Master Plan, and there is fear that it will be done, and then work will cease. City talked about having it voted on in October, but there have been no public meetings.

Oct. 2008 -

1) On the 2025 report, Richard talked with Toni Griffin concerning public access and input.

- The report is supposed to be posted by the end of this week on line.
- The City is willing to do a public meeting in each ward. When and where remain up in the air.
- The plan will be voted on at a November Central Planning Board meeting.
- Comments and questions raised in the listening session were being gathered by Don Edwards. It was unclear how they would be “taken into” the report itself.

2) The City is still proceeding with planning through “redevelopment zones”. Both the scattered site plan for the West Ward, and the Boys & Girls Club “redevelopment zones” were recently presented at City Council pre-meetings (the latter was deferred for vote).

James St. residents are protesting one part of the redevelopment zone for Martin Luther King Blvd, which is taking a street full of historic row houses and redesignating the block for "mixed use". They are looking for letters of support for their effort. Anyone who can contact Derek Ware. MPWG may also compose a letter of support, since the concept of neighborhood planning is a basic thread of all of our work.

- 3) Robin Dougherty reported on the still impending changes to Newark's water system. She and others are monitoring this issue and will remain in communication
- 4) There were also brief discussions on the 322 families still in Baxter Terrace, the proposed ordinance on housing security,

Nov 2008 . – cancelled

February 2009 MPWG – There was a discussion about the new Reexam Report. The tentative date for this to be presented at the Planning Board was Feb. 17, 2008. This is the only "legal" requirement for the Master Plan. Also, it was thought that money had been appropriated and Shapiro, Preiss hired to continue on the Master Plan creation process.

April 2009, MPWG – The minutes report that the Richard Cammarieri spoke at the Feb. 17 Central Planning Board meeting on behalf of MPWG, praising the city's work, and also asking for a timeline on the completion of the Master Plan, and the next steps. Some zoning proposals were passed at the Planning Board (*I believe this was the new zoning grid – we could check*). They now go to the City Council which is supposed to be in April. What are the next steps to completing the Master Plan? Will there be anything at the neighborhood level? MPG decided that several people would talk with Ms. Griffin informally, and we would also request her attendance at an upcoming meeting.

We also agreed to develop some "models" of how neighborhood planning is done in other cities. Nancy and Angelique volunteered to develop this.

It was felt that more publicity "push" would help get the Master Plan moving.

May 13, 2009 MPWG – Toni Griffin was our guest - There was a long complicated discussion of the steps necessary. The City is doing scope of work for RFP for Master Plan an which will contain the following elements: economic growth, open space, mobility, housing, historic & cultural, sustainability, infrastructure and possibly neighborhoods. The city is also doing scope of work for "civic engagement" piece. The process would begin in fall and take 18 to 2 months.

Two Task Forces will be formed. Interagency Task Force and Citizens Task Force (advisory) MPWG can submit names.

The question about the necessary zoning changes was raised "it will be addressed" no detail.

MPWG presented the write ups done by N. Zak and A Goode of how other cities do "neighborhood planning, and we also discussed how plans could get updated once they were made. The 9 zoning changes have not yet come before the City Council (*is it the Bayonne Box changes – I think that is what they are talking about here*).

Ms Griffin stated that the city had to do a COAH plan and the one which was done was solely to meet the need for a state application. There was a discussion about outreach, and it was pointed out that good outreach takes time. And "street funds" to pay people to go house to house would be helpful.

July 2009 MPWG meeting – Damon Rich presented proposed Waterfront Zoning . He also announced the boat rides. See the minutes for details to the discussion. The idea of a CBA agreement requiring specific jobs to go to Newark residents, and/or specific numbers of residential units to be affordable were raised.